The Illinois Commerce Commission will be hosting a Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) tutorial on **Wednesday, August 3, 2005 from 1 to 3 p.m.** This information session will be held at the **Illinois Commerce Commission, 160 North LaSalle, Chicago, Illinois in the Main Hearing Room on the 8th floor. Those individuals that would like to participate from Springfield can attend the session via audio connection at 527 E Capitol Avenue, Hearing Room A. This session is open to the public, and all interested parties are encouraged to attend.**

What is BPL? BPL is a relatively new technology that is gaining in popularity for the following reasons:

- It can foster greater customer options in broadband
- Provide more efficient management of the power supply system
- Ensure increased operational reliability
- Quickly install equipment by existing utility personnel

It is relatively inexpensive, compared to other broadband options, since distribution lines are already in place. The Yankee Group estimates that it costs approximately $100 per home versus $1200 per home for DSL installations.

BPL also has a tremendous potential for enhancing the operability of the electric grid itself. It will provide utility companies with the capabilities to:

- Read meters from a remote source
- Determine outages on the system
- Provide better price signals to customers
- Promote energy efficiency by controlling appliances within a household
- Monitor the overall security of the power system.

In addition, BPL uses low voltage power lines to deliver broadband service through electric outlets. With that, BPL can provide a third broadband option to residential and commercial end users. Many consumers are unable to obtain broadband services from their local phone or cable companies (availability, cost, etc.). But every customer has an electric wire into their premises, and BPL opens the door to obtain broadband service over the existing electric line.

This is a very exciting topic, and companies are reporting success to date. Scheduled presenters are:

- Don Harker, Navigant Consulting, An Overview of BPL. Mr. Harker is a Director with Navigant Consulting. He has been working with utility companies and agencies of the U.S. government to develop business plans for the implementation of BPL technology. He will be sharing some of his findings with us.

- Jason Bird, Village of Princeton. Princeton's Successful Implementation of BPL. Mr. Bird is the Superintendent of Electric & Telecommunications in the municipally owned electric and telecom system in Princeton. Princeton is located in western Illinois off of Interstate 80. When faced with the potential loss of one of its largest employers because of the lack of adequate broadband service, Princeton decided it was time to take matters

into their own hands. As a result, they have successfully implemented a BPL system, have maintained their largest employer, and received an economic development grant from the Federal government to develop a technology park.

- Bob Mill, Director, Regulatory Policy-Planning and Greg Lovett, Managing Supervisor, Products and Services, Ameren, An Overview of the Cape Girardeau Pilot. Ameren initiated a BPL pilot in Cape Girardeau approximately 5 years ago. Messrs. Mill and Lovett will be discussing the results of that pilot, as well as some of the regulatory hurdles that an investor-owned utility will need to resolve before fully engaging in BPL.

- Jay Birnbaum, President, Current Technologies, An Overview of Work done with Cinergy. Current Technologies is a privately held company that is focusing on building and delivering innovative BPL equipment and networks. Current Technologies is currently working with Cinergy, the large investor-owned utility located in Cincinnati, to develop offerings in the Cincinnati area.

The presentations will be very informative and engaging. If you would like additional information, or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mary Collins at 312-814-1628 or mcollins@icc.state.il.us.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you.